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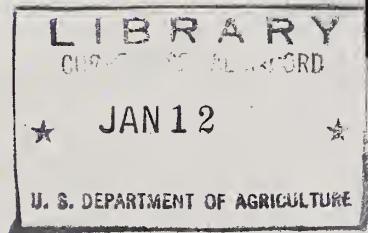


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EXTENSION SERVICE  
*Review*

DECEMBER 1960



EVALUATING THE PROGRAM



# EXTENSION SERVICE Review

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**T**he Extension Service Review is for Extension educators—in County, State and Federal Extension agencies—who work directly or indirectly to help people learn how to use the newest findings in agriculture and home economics research to bring about a more abundant life for themselves and their community.

The Review offers the Extension worker, in his role of educational leader, professional guideposts, new routes, and tools for speedier, more successful endeavor. Through this exchange of methods, tried and found successful by Extension agents, the Review serves as a source of ideas and useful information on how to reach people and thus help them utilize more fully their own resources, to farm more efficiently, and to make the home and community a better place to live.

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## EAR TO THE GROUND

When a man builds a house, he goes through a series of steps. He obtains or draws up plans, gathers materials and tools, puts in the foundation, and proceeds according to the plans.

Building an extension program is a similar process. We sit down with local people to draw up plans. Next we select the materials and tools. And we lay the foundation when we assign responsibilities to extension workers and committee members. Then we build the program according to the plans.

But there is one important difference between building a house and building an extension program. The builder can see progress as the house takes shape. But it isn't quite this easy to see progress in an extension program.

That's why we evaluate. As Ohio's Assistant Director D. B. Robinson points out in the first article of this issue, we want to see where we are and how we are doing. We want to find out if we laid the foundation properly, if we are using the right methods and tools, and if we are making progress.

The builder doesn't wait until the house is completed to find out whether the job is being done pro-

perly. He constantly measures and checks to see that everything is done according to specifications.

And we have to do the same thing in extension work. We can't wait until the program is complete to evaluate. We have to continually examine our methods and our progress—build evaluation into the total planning process.

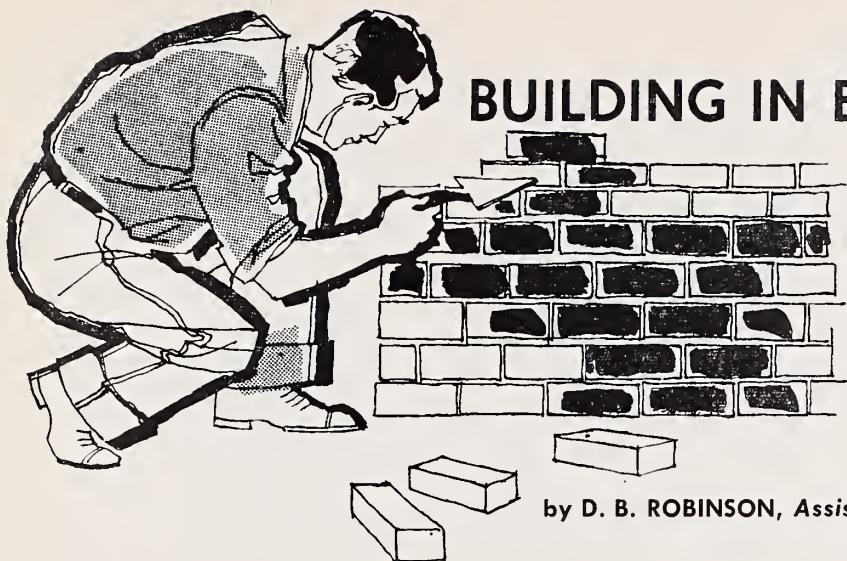
There are many things we can measure in extension and it would be physically impossible to evaluate them all completely. So we have to establish some priorities—select the most important items that can be measured.

Then we have to decide how we are to measure this activity or method. This can range from a simple, informal survey with a small group of people to a broader formal study. Both types, informal and formal, give valuable information that will let us know where we are and how we are doing.

Next month's issue will focus on graduate study. We'll have articles explaining the advantages to be found at various land-grant and non-land-grant colleges. And we'll announce 1961 summer school offerings and scholarships available to extension workers.—EHR

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# BUILDING IN EVALUATION

by D. B. ROBINSON, Assistant Director of Extension, Ohio

EVALUATION is an important step in program development. It provides a factual basis for drawing conclusions and making sound judgments.

Evaluation is a process by which we determine the worth, value, or meaning of something. This something in extension may be the progress and results at any step in the program development process.

Evaluation is needed in extension so we can measure the desirable and undesirable outcomes of educational work. We need to know where we are and how we are doing.

Evaluation should be done by all extension workers and lay leaders at the level at which teaching is done. Extension cannot be sure how much it is accomplishing until the effects of its teaching can be traced in the lives of people it serves. It is not a separate thing, but must be built into the program development process.

Program development, as defined in this series of special issues of the Review, consists of four steps. These are: analyzing your audience and their needs, developing a program to meet these needs, launching and carrying out the program, and evaluating progress and results.

It is impractical to attempt a complete evaluation of program development at one time. So you must first decide what part of the total process will be appraised.

Teaching is successful when it

causes a change in the desired direction. Changes in human behavior may be in terms of change of attitude and interest, gain in knowledge, development of skills and abilities, and increased understanding.

Evaluation is made in terms of these changes in behavior. The adoption of a recommended economic or social practice, frequently used in extension education as a measure of results, is a sign of change in behavior. It shows that the individual has acquired some new attitude, knowledge, skill, or ability.

Measurement of change may be made at three places in the program: at the beginning before any change occurs to establish a benchmark, during the teaching process to determine progress, and at the end of the teaching process to determine accomplishment.

## Wide Range

Obtaining accurate information about the extent to which we are doing what we set out to do is an essential part of evaluation. Evaluation ranges from casual observation to rigorous scientific research. For everyday use by extension workers, only two groups will be considered—casual observations and informal studies.

*Casual Observations*—This is the everyday evaluation of our work. Much evidence can be collected from

observations during: office calls, farm and home visits, meetings, conversations, discussions, local leader contacts and personal interviews.

*Informal Studies*—This is a systematic way of evaluating phases of our work. Evidence is collected through questionnaires filled out at meetings; mailed questionnaires; report forms filled out by farmers, homemakers, or leaders; surveys made by local leaders, school children, 4-H clubs, and extension workers; discussions with commercial dealers such as seed, fertilizer, lumber, and commodity dealers; and other sources.

## Information Sources

The teaching objectives and goals should state who is to be affected or to whom the training will be directed. These people may be extension cooperators, participants, leaders, program committees, advisory councils, extension workers, radio-television audiences and other extension audiences.

The daily and monthly records kept by extension workers are logical places to record findings. Formal surveys and questionnaires require special tabulation forms.

Extension workers cannot work directly with all people in program development. They must "tune in"

(See Evaluation Step, page 246)

# Do You Know When You've Taught?

by MRS. JEWELL G. FESSENDEN, *Federal Extension Service*

**B**y estimate? Formal evaluation? Informal studies? The answer is probably some of all three methods.

Imagination and some know-how on evaluation techniques can go a long way in helping extension workers find evidence of teaching.

Here's an example of what imagination may produce: In 1959 county extension workers in the United States visited about 2 million families. Suppose every family had been asked, "What is the most important problem you think extension should be working on today?" Answers from 2 million families would be revealing.

Let's apply that imagination to a county situation. Recently a county agent told me that extension workers and leaders in his county averaged six meetings a day, with an average attendance of 30 people. During one month this means that more than 3,000 people attended extension meetings.

## *Contrasting Surveys*

These people could help evaluate many other extension activities. For example, they could be asked to answer a few questions about county extension radio programs.

This would be an informal method of finding out: if people attending meetings listened to the programs, if they felt the programs were worthwhile, if they remembered using any idea and what idea was used, and subjects of interest to these listeners.

In contrast with this easy informal method, you could conduct a highly scientific type of evaluation on the effectiveness of radio programs. Then you would use a representative sample of people in a county, collect information carefully by mail or personal interview, and make detailed and careful analyses.

More time, effort, and expense would be required for the formal evaluation. And skilled research help would be needed.

How do you decide what to evaluate and what methods to use?

Teaching is done in small packages. Evaluation is also done in small bits. Knowledge, attitudes, skills, practices, may be evaluated separately or all in the same process.

## *Selecting Methods*

Many methods are available. All have values and limitations. A variety of methods such as observations, personal interviews, records, and testimonials are useful. No one method is used exclusively.

An example of being selective in what to evaluate in a county extension program during a given year might be something like this:

From all agricultural projects undertaken, only pasture improvement may be selected.

Fertilization may be the only specific area to be evaluated during a year. The kind of change to be evaluated may be the application of recommended varieties of fertilizer, rate, method, and time of application.

The decision may be to collect information only from members of the various livestock and dairy associations who used pastures.

The method may be a sample of all members through a mail questionnaire, personal interviews, or telephone interviews if the rate of telephone subscribers is high.

Leaders and agents may do follow-up to secure a high rate of returns. Tabulation and analysis would be done in the county extension office.

Similar studies could be made on other phases of the county program.

In home economics, for example, the effectiveness of a program on

freezing foods may be the subject matter area selected. Packaging of vegetables could be the specific phase to be evaluated.

In 4-H, you might want to determine what parents know about their son's or daughter's 4-H projects. A few simple questions would give a basis for parent education on 4-H work.

## *Plan for Evaluation*

Build evaluation in. Whether a formal or informal method is used, evaluation is more successful if planned when the program is planned, or at least before teaching is done. After you have arrived at a meeting, it is too late to plan an effective evaluation of the meeting.

If you want to know what the group knows before you teach and what has been learned after you taught, you must be ready with questions and with your plan. Planning certain key questions to ask will also help you to do a better job of teaching! Accurate records of attendance must be kept if people are to be contacted later.

A good plan, whether for formal or informal evaluation, will include the following:

Statement of the project, program, or activity to be evaluated.

Specifics to be studied. Phase of project, program, or activity. Kind of behavior change—attitude, knowledge, skill, practice.

Specific objectives of phases or areas of work that are to be evaluated.

Purposes of the evaluation—to find out: if people have learned, if attitudes have changed, if practices have been improved or changed, or if new skills have been developed.

Plan for collecting information—how and when it will be collected and who will answer the questions.

A list of questions, observation forms, or records to be used in the evaluation.

A plan for tabulating, summarizing, and reporting the information.

Recently a hardware dealer called a home economics agent to ask, "Why didn't you tell me you were going to recommend the use of a certain

*(See Do You Know, page 248)*



# MEASURE YOUR DREAMS

by MARGARET C. BROWNE, *State Leader, Home Economics Extension, Wisconsin*

Most of us are optimists when we plan. We have visions of doing so many things for so many people that our enthusiasm carries us into the clouds. We, like Poe, "dream dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before."

This is good. This is the fabric of which change is made, the visions that precede progress.

Unrestricted daydreaming, in the jargon of today, is known as brainstorming. It will produce lots of ideas. If done with local people and the total county staff, agents will soon be convinced that the educational situation in their county should be labeled "opportunity unlimited."

## Keeping Control

In every county there are countless things to be done and multitudes to be reached. At some point, however, you have to define limits, stake out territory to work in, and clothe the dreams with the reality of a pencil and paper plan that spells out the objectives, the recipients, the staff responsibilities. Then, to keep the dream from floating out of control, plans must be decided on to periodically measure how well the dream is being transformed into reality.

A measuring device is needed, but dreams can't be measured with a yardstick. Tools have to be designed to suit individual dreams; and they must be worked into the plan so that measurement can be taken at strategic times and places.

Many of us have only sketchy training in the scientific method. All of us have only limited time and money. Obviously, evaluation is not for us! Or is it?

The more limited the resources, the more important evaluation becomes! But it must be realistic evaluation, geared to the situation and the resources at hand. It need not be pretentious to be valuable. It can be done in many informal ways. For each item that you want to evaluate, there are suitable methods for doing it.

Basically, all of us evaluate so that we will have facts, not opinions, to guide us in improving our effectiveness and in reporting to the public. You evaluate your situation and your clientele to determine needs, set priorities, and establish benchmarks for measuring progress.

You evaluate to determine if time is being used to the best advantage, if the most effective teaching methods are being used, if you are reaching the people who have the greatest need.

County extension workers evaluate to improve program content. Is it pertinent? Is it up-to-date? Is it education, or is it service? Does it touch vital points in the lives of people? And, of crucial importance, does it bring about desired changes?

You evaluate, too, for public relations reasons. We are responsible for keeping our governing bodies, as well as the publics we serve, informed.

You evaluate to assess professional competence. Is the subject matter out-of-date? Are your techniques getting rusty?

Agents who evaluate for these reasons will never fall into the trap of trying to measure effectiveness in terms of "busyness." In a true evaluation, days that seem like a rat race may show the least progress.

## Possible Methods

Most county extension program evaluation must be the do-it-yourself variety. This means it will largely be done by simple methods, such as listening, talking to people, observing, being critical and analytical. It will be done by discussion in staff meetings, simple questionnaires, surveys, and spot checks.

It will be done at the beginning, midway, and at the end of some projects. It will be done by being constantly alert to evidence of progress and change, as well as to signs of ineffectiveness.

Sometimes it will be done by taking an intensive look at some small segment of the program, or the clientele, as in a case study. A study of a family, for example, makes it possible to measure changes in attitudes and values, increased ability to make wise decisions, growth in service to the community.

A county staff, bent on measuring its dreams, must learn to cultivate awareness, to see unexpected as well as expected results. It is not enough to see the success stories. The failures must be examined, too.

Informal evaluation should become a habit, and it should be uninhibited. It should be an honest, critical analysis of data collected and observations made. It should be put in writing to have continued value.

(See *Measuring Dreams*, page 254)

# We Found Out How Program Projection Works

by MRS. BETTY M. FULWOOD, *Home Demonstration Agent*, and  
W. L. ADAMS, *County Agent, Alcorn County, Mississippi*

**A**LMOST every extension worker has dreamed of hitting an idea jackpot, and seeing his recommendation sweep through a county with full acceptance by everybody.

We in Alcorn County, Miss., thought we had found this idea jackpot in Program Projection. True, Program Projection is not a new idea. But, inspired ourselves, we inspired our people to do what everyone thought an excellent, comprehensive piece of long range program planning.

We followed the book, too, or so we thought. We collected, and helped leaders collect, a wealth of basic data and information on Alcorn County. We involved people—county and community leaders, homemakers, farmers, and industrial workers. Practically all other agencies, such as the county health department, county school officials, and other agricultural agencies, joined in the effort.

The written plan was to be the guiding light for extension and other groups for years to come. This was in 1956.

## *Facing Facts*

After 2 years of struggle with this "guiding light" came the question—why didn't it work? It was not up to expectations.

Possibly it is to our credit that we recognized that fact. We sat down together—our county staff had grown from four agents to six by this time—and tried to analyze our problems and our program. Were we not being as effective as we should be, or were we spread too thin? Was our county extension program too broad in concept?

"We need help," was the consensus. So the call went out to our State University. Specialists in pro-

gram planning, field studies, and economics, plus our district supervisors, answered the call. Another day of analysis resulted in requesting assistance from the Federal office.

The answer was, would we serve as a pilot county to develop criteria for program projection—criteria which could be used later by others? We couldn't afford to miss the opportunity.

Four times during the past 2 years we have sat down together (county staff, district agents, State specialists, and FES analysts) to develop these criteria and apply them to our own program projection efforts.

## *Forming Criteria*

How should organization for and the process of planning be done? Developing criteria for effective program planning came before we could evaluate our own plan. Slowly we developed this list of conditions and procedure.

First among these was that committee membership should be representative of the county. To be sure it is representative, a complete analysis of the county is prerequisite. Geographic areas, social groups, interests, etc., must be identified and their relevance to extension program planning determined.

Each member of the county planning committee should be selected by the group he represents. We then agreed that each member of the committee should serve for a designated period of time, and a definite plan should be made for replacement of members.

Possibly the most important criteria developed was that of role definition, understanding, and acceptance. The purpose of the committee must be clearly spelled out,

along with a statement of the roles of professional workers and committee members. Together with this is the need for a statement and clear understanding of the scope of extension's educational responsibilities. This, we might add, was the biggest problem with our Alcorn County program.

As we developed these conditions which should be met in the process of program planning and evaluated our county plan in light of these criteria, we began to see "why it didn't work."

## *Self Application*

Actual evaluation of the county program was done, and is still being done, by the county staff working together. State and Federal specialists helped only with developing the criteria by which to evaluate.

As a result of this self-evaluation process, we have begun revising our county program projection process. The original steering committee for county program planning has been replaced by a committee more nearly representative of all interests and groups. All but two members were elected by the group they represent. A definite tenure of office and schedule for replacement was planned.

The purpose of the committee, the role of professional workers, and the role of committee members have so far been partially spelled out. Already, however, the operational plan is evolving, and members of this committee are involving others in collecting background data and making a countywide survey to determine true needs.

Though we are only part way along the continuous circle of program projection, the way ahead is much clearer because of this evaluation. Only by a lot of thinking, planning, and hard work has even this much been accomplished.

To sum up what we learned: Set up your criteria—or your conception of the ideal and how to go about reaching it. Then as you go, evaluate continuously. Plan, carry through, and evaluate, seeking leadership and guidance of the local people.

This, with various guises, has always been the way of Extension. It still works.

# *Evaluating the Organization for Rural Development*

by WARD F. PORTER, *Federal Extension Service*

**A** PROGRAM stands or falls on the way it is organized. This is almost a truism.

In this instance, organization includes the formal structure as well as the process of program planning and execution. Systematic evaluation of this phase of Rural Development will produce results in terms of greater program effectiveness.

Evaluation can be thought of quite simply as the process of determining the worth, value, or meaning of something—in this case, the Rural Development organization.

## *Weighing Progress*

Most extension workers think of evaluation as focusing on program accomplishments and results. This is certainly logical because we all are vitally interested in maximizing the impact of any program. Progress and end results are, of course, measured in terms of program objectives and the methods used in carrying out the program.

Another type of evaluation takes place at the opportunity or means level. In this case, we assess the extent to which opportunities or means are provided for the attainment of goals. There is no direct measurement of results in terms of changes in behavior. Rather, emphasis is on the means used to accomplish the educational objectives.

Evaluation of means is of major concern in this article. In a program as complex in organization as Rural Development, it is essential that there be constant and systematic appraisal of the structure and process through which it is implemented.

Research and experience provide certain criteria for appraising program organization and process. These permit reasonably adequate and systematic evaluation of these vital elements of a Rural Development Program.

If this type of evaluation is to be feasible and practical where limited resources are available for research and evaluation, the design and procedure must be relatively simple. However, the evaluation should be as specific and as objective as possible.

The scope and nature of such an evaluation can vary, depending on interests, needs, and resources. This article suggests some items that may be considered most meaningful.

A Guide for Evaluating Rural Development Programs was developed by the author with the cooperation of L. I. Jones, Federal Extension Service. Staff members of the Agricultural Research Service and Agricultural Marketing Service reviewed the initial schedule and offered suggestions.

## *Three-Part Plan*

Designed as a simple, self-evaluation guide for Rural Development committees, the Guide is divided into three major segments—formal organizational structure, program planning and implementation, and a limited (and somewhat subjective) appraisal of program results.

The Rural Development Program has at least three distinctive fundamental characteristics.

Its primary orientation is toward the disadvantaged group. But this in no way denies the contribution the program can make to all residents of pilot county areas.

Two other distinguishing features of the program are the type of organization and the primary source of initiative and support. Rural Development stresses the "team approach" and coordination of efforts of many organizations and agencies. Further, the program is primarily based on local support; it has not been conceived or treated as a Federal program. Because of these characteristics, program organization em-

phasizes operation through representative State and county committees.

The first section of the Guide attempts to appraise the extent to which Rural Development committees are representative of all relevant agencies and organizations.

Research and practical experience indicate the importance of consensus within these committees on: the purpose and objectives of Rural Development, the roles and functions of each agency and organization participating, and the function of the State and county committees.

This first phase of the Guide requires additional information on the functioning of the State and/or county RD committees. The frequency of meetings, functions actually performed, and the subcommittee structure are all covered.

The first phase also calls for answers concerning major organizational problems and suggestions for improving the effectiveness of the organization for Rural Development.

## *Planning and Implementation*

The second section of this Guide focuses on the program planning process and program execution. The basic principles of sound program planning afford criteria for appraising any particular Rural Development Program.

Opportunity is provided for assessing the extent to which each pilot county has gone through the major steps in program development. These steps include: collection of basic background and benchmark information; identification of major problems and needs; determination of specific program objectives; and planning programs consistent with problems, needs, and objectives.

Three questions require reflection on the extent to which agencies and

*(See RD Organization, page 248)*

# Survey Results Can Spark Programs

by HAROLD D. GUTHIER,  
Assistant Editor, Illinois

**A** SIMPLE question tossed out at a county agricultural extension council meeting has sparked some new and popular extension programs for the families in Ogle County, Ill.

It all began when one conscientious council member asked, "Just how are people accepting the extension program in our county?" No one could really answer for all 3,760 farmers in the county. After some more discussion, they decided to work with the home economics extension council to take a survey among farmers and homemakers.

They set up these objectives: to determine the understanding and attitude of the people toward the Extension Service, to evaluate past programs, and to obtain suggestions for new subjects and methods of distributing information.

## Advance Planning

Farm Adviser Hugh Fulkerson and Home Adviser Mrs. Pearl Barnes first asked for ideas from 79 key farm and home leaders. Their next step was to develop a questionnaire.

Since many of the questions related to use of information activities, Extension Editor Hadley Read and his staff were asked to assist in planning the survey. They met with the planning committee to develop the questionnaire and later helped train council members who were to make interviews.

Since many of the questions were of interest only to men or women, it was decided to have a different questionnaire for each group. Of course some questions were the same on each survey.

The plan called for personally in-

terviewing 80 farmers and 80 homemakers. The farmers were selected at random from the complete list of all farmers in the county kept by the county Agricultural Stabilization Committee office.

Half of the women were also selected at random from the list to represent rural homemakers. The other 40 women were selected by random sampling from the telephone directories of selected towns.

Interviews were completed with 36 men and 53 women.

Despite the limitations of the small sample, the Ogle County councils and extension staff believe that their survey findings have proved valuable.

## Public Knowledge

For example, here are some of the highlights of the survey that show the general public understanding of extension.

Although Fulkerson and Mrs. Barnes had served in the county for only 3 years, about 40 percent of the men and 35 percent of the women knew their advisers and also knew that they were responsible for the county extension program. Only about 20 percent of both men and women knew that the farm and home advisers were staff members of the University of Illinois.

Only about 20 percent of the men and women knew that the councils were responsible for interviewing and recommending the employment of advisers. Only 15 percent of the men and 13 percent of the women knew that council members were appointed by the dean of the college of agriculture. About 35 percent of the men and women knew that committees appointed by the extension councils planned the extension programs.

About 80 percent of the men and 60 percent of the women knew that a county could get help from specialists at the University. About 70 percent of those surveyed knew that advisers' services were available to everyone.

The survey also showed what phases of the extension program were best known.

Men were best acquainted with soil testing, demonstrations, the dairy herd improvement association program, and 4-H club work. Women

were best acquainted with 4-H club work, monthly unit meetings, farm and home development, special interest meetings, and the art show.

Both men and women were given an opportunity to rate the sources of information from the extension office that were of most value to them. Men rated these sources in this order: Ogle Farmer (farm bureau publication), farm adviser column in newspapers, demonstrations, bulletins, and radio broadcasts. Women rated these sources most valuable: home adviser's column in newspapers, weekly newspaper stories, Ogle Farmer, county meetings, and bulletins.

The survey also showed what men and women thought about various 4-H activities other than projects.

To plan future extension programs, the councils wanted to find out which subjects were of most interest. Men and women were given a list of subjects to rate.

The survey also showed newspaper reading habits and favorite radio and television stations. Most men wanted to see the farm and home advisers present a television program. A majority of the women had no opinion on this. But of those who expressed an opinion, most would also have liked to see an extension TV program.

## Using the Findings

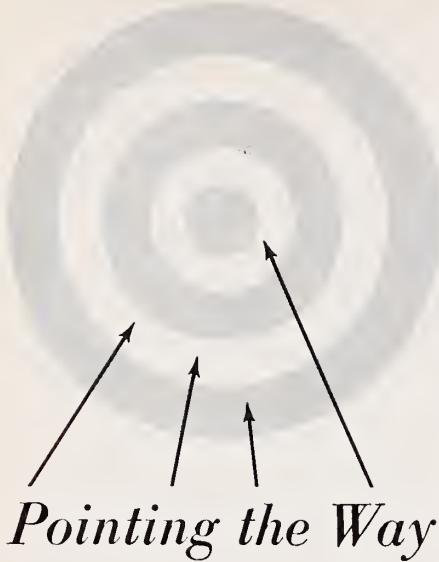
Probably the biggest gain from the survey so far has been the new interest stimulated in certain programs.

On one of the coldest, iciest nights of the winter, about 130 farm youth and their parents attended a vocational guidance training school. Business and professional men and women described their occupations, the training required, and opportunities for young people in their fields.

Lessons related to meal planning, clothing selection, home records, mental health, and safety were included in the 1960-61 home economics extension program after careful study of the survey.

Slides, lessons, and mass media have been used to emphasize farm and home safety. County people are showing more interest in preventing accidents around farms and homes.

*(See Spark Programs, page 252)*



## *Pointing the Way*

by GARRETT E. BLACKWELL, JR.,  
*Agricultural Agent in Charge,*  
*Yuma County, Arizona*

How do people feel about citizenship activities? What do they think about public affairs issues? How well do they understand these subjects?

Yuma County, Ariz., wanted answers to these and other questions about their extension audience. The answers were needed for the new pilot project in public affairs education. And they were needed to establish guidelines for county program planning in public affairs and continuing education.

Yuma is one of 12 counties participating in the project sponsored by the Fund for Adult Education and the Cooperative Extension Service. The project is intended to help establish and conduct county programs that will:

- Broaden and strengthen extension programs, stimulate public interest, and obtain increased citizen participation in public affairs.
- Advance informal education for citizenship responsibility through involving larger numbers of people in program planning and other appropriate experiences to develop their leadership.

These objectives correspond to the Scope Report areas of: leadership

development, community improvement and resource development, and public affairs.

To assure 250 completed interviews, 500 names were drawn from a total list of all major county directories and mailing lists. There was an equal number of men and women.

The questionnaire contained eight major divisions—characteristics of population, concerns of people, knowledge of and participation in extension programs, farm-city relations, political attitudes, attitudes toward schools, and continuing education interests.

The field survey was conducted by extension personnel from the State Extension Office and Maricopa and Pinal Counties. This was to avoid, as much as possible, prejudicing answers through acquaintance with local extension personnel.

Results gave us the following information.

Yuma County's population is comprised chiefly of people who have moved into the area during the past few years. Only 11 percent of the people interviewed were natives.

Approximately three-fourths of the respondents had an income of \$3,500 and over. One out of four had incomes of \$7,000 or more.

Eight out of 10 interviewed lived in Yuma or its suburbs. Over 53 percent of farmers and farm managers live in town.

Nearly 50 percent of the people had completed 4 years of high school. More than one in four had completed a year or more of college.

Over 91 percent listed concerns, averaging 5.6 per person. Concerns listed most frequently were schools, employment and industry, water rights, taxation, health service facilities, and community physical upkeep. (Less than one-third of those listing concerns had tried to do anything about them.)

Opinions as to major obstacles to Yuma County's future development centered around lack of industry and employment opportunities, and anti-progressiveness and self-interest on the part of those who control the county.

It was stimulating to find that 30 percent of the respondents knew members of the county extension staff by name. More than eight out

of 10 had some extension contact during the past year. Sixty-seven percent had seen a 4-H or home economics exhibit, while 60 percent had seen a 4-H member's project.

This posed the question of how many people had extension contacts if 4-H and home economics exhibits and projects were excluded. Further analysis showed seven out of 10 had some extension contact in areas other than 4-H and home economics exhibits and projects.

Sixty-eight percent of the total group approved of agents working on public affairs issues while about 22 percent had no opinion. Those approving thought there was a definite need for assistance in these areas and thought the county agents were well-educated and qualified to assume this responsibility.

A little over three-fourths of those interviewed were interested in one or more topics for continued education. Subjects listed most frequently were Spanish, family financial recordkeeping and psychological basis for human behavior.

### *Implications for County*

What does this mean to us as extension workers? The questionnaire serves as a compass to point the way, a governor to control the speed with which we move into unfamiliar areas of extension responsibility, and as an educational tool to inform program planning committees as well as old and new clientele.

Yuma County Extension Service needs to evaluate current program offerings in light of voiced concerns, interests, and opinions because:

People are vitally interested in continuing adult education with major emphasis and interests in subjects related to public affairs.

Ninety percent of the people are concerned about one or more public affairs issues.

Less than one-third of the citizens are fulfilling their civic responsibilities in regard to public affairs issues.

Citizens favor the idea of Cooperative Extension Service conducting educational programs in public affairs.

(See *Pointing the Way*, page 254)

# Forming and Maintaining Program Planning Groups

by ROSWELL C. BLOUNT, Research Assistant, and GEORGE M. BEAL, Professor of Rural Sociology, Iowa

**T**ODAY Extension and other organizations are searching for more meaningful ways to meet the needs of the people they serve. Their problem is made more difficult by the rapid increase in technology, changing value and need structures, more diverse publics, a broader concept of their educational responsibilities, and the increasing complexity of their own organization.

Extension always has worked closely with lay people in determining their needs and involving them in educational programs to meet those needs. This puts extension workers, especially county staffs, squarely in the middle of the business of organizing and maintaining groups to perform these functions.

To better understand the important elements of group formation and maintenance in extension work, a study was made in Iowa to test a limited set of hypotheses. These hypotheses encompass what is believed to be the core of forming and maintaining planning groups.

## Group Elements

Dr. Charles P. Loomis of Michigan State University suggests that a group, as a social system, has the following nine basic elements: ends, facility (means available to attain the ends), power (the capacity to control others through authority or influence), norms, belief, sentiment, status-roles, rank, and sanction.

Three of these elements are especially important at the early stages of group formation and maintenance. For instance, if extension personnel are going to organize a program planning group, they must communicate the following three elements to the group:

*Ends or objectives*—what they should be attempting to accomplish in program planning and projection.

*Means or methods*—that are available in accomplishing these ends.

*Authority and responsibility*—of the group as it works on its task.

To better delineate the "felt needs" of people, Iowa extension workers recently carried out an "ideal program planning process." State personnel developed the planning process and a county staff agreed to attempt to implement it.

## Experimental Planning

A special program projection steering committee was set up to survey different problem areas in the county and establish problem area subcommittees. The subcommittees were to study needs in these areas, project the needs into the next 5 years, and make specific program recommendations.

The steering committee was responsible for summarizing, integrating, and setting priorities on subcommittee recommendations. The county extension council then approved, rejected, or modified the recommendations and determined major program emphasis for the 5-year period ahead.

Special training on the "ideal program planning process" was given to county staff. The basic elements of the planning process were taught to the council, steering committee, and subcommittees. The county staff acted as resource people to the committees.

Research accompanied this action program. Data were gathered by schedule, questionnaires, tape recordings, and observation. Twenty-seven general hypotheses and 60 empirical hypotheses were tested.

The group's knowledge of its objectives was closely related to how well these objectives were presented in the orientation session. Adequacy was tied to: clarity of presentation,

time spent discussing the elements, relation of the presentation of the elements to other aspects of the meeting, method of presentation, and the amount of communication perceived.

There was higher understanding when group members went through the discussion process of: receiving information and asking questions, evaluating the objectives, and making suggestions. There was low understanding in groups where the initial presentation of the objectives was dominated by the person making the presentation.

Further investigation showed that greater understanding of objectives was positively associated with: the time and emphasis on the presentation of the objectives, the degree to which persons making the presentation agreed on the objectives, and simplicity and logic of the presentation.

Groups that restated their objectives in each meeting had greater understanding of their objectives. Groups that were able to get direct and authoritative answers to their questions about objectives had greater understanding of them. Greater understanding of objectives was found where those reclarifying the objectives were in agreement.

Those groups that had the lowest understanding of objectives can be characterized by: lack of discussion of goals and objectives at the orientation session, and lack of discussion to attempt to reclarify objectives in subsequent meetings.

There was a positive relationship between a group's knowledge of its objectives and the degree to which members were satisfied with their work. In addition, groups that had high satisfaction scores also rated high the adequacy of objective presentation and discussion at the orientation session.

A positive relationship was found between a group's knowledge of the means available and the adequacy with which the means were presented in the orientation session.

Higher understanding was associated with discussion of means in the orientation session. Low understanding was associated with highly dominated orientation.

*(See Planning Groups, page 254)*

# *The County Committeeman in Extension Programming*

by BOND L. BIBLE, *Rural Sociology Specialist, Ohio*

WHAT do county committee members think their job is in extension programming? What do county agents think the committeeman's job is? What is the ideal division of work between these two groups? How can they work together most effectively?

A research study in Pennsylvania gives some answers to these questions. Information was obtained by personally interviewing 170 executive committee members (county advisory group) and 32 county agents in 8 counties.

## **Determining Roles**

Executive committee members and county extension agents from the eight counties answered questions for both role definition and perception of role performance.

The committee members' role in extension programming was assessed from 12 items, describing activities in which committeemen may or may not be expected to engage. In a similar manner, six performance items were used describing activities in which county extension agents may or may not be expected to engage in their work with the executive committee.

Performance items reported here centered around program determination, execution, and evaluation.

More than 70 percent of committeemen and agents indicated that executive committee members were expected to help plan the annual program, to initiate ideas at committee meetings, to secure information locally for the committee, to present reports relative to the program, and to consider planning at all their executive committee meetings.

Agents were expected to provide committee members with the right to participate and assist in the program planning process. Most respondents said that committeemen should be informed on all extension activities.

The job of detailed program determination is often done through subcommittees. Over three-fourths felt that the agent should "permit subcommittees to work by themselves at times."

Committeemen were about equally divided as to whether or not the agent should be obligated to plan the program and then have it approved by the executive committee. Committee members gave more re-

sponsibility to the agents than the agents did themselves.

Less than a third of the executive committee members said they always or usually take part in program determination. However, two-thirds of the agents saw committeemen as performing the planning function.

Ideally, program determination was perceived as a cooperative undertaking between executive committee members and county extension agents.

## **Carrying Out Programs**

Committeemen were expected to publicize extension meetings, to officially represent the county extension service when needed, and to assist in locating facilities for demonstration teaching.

There was considerable uncertainty about the committeeman's obligation to assist in determining teaching methods. About one-third of the respondents said committee members should provide such assistance. Apparently, county extension agents varied in use made of committee members in deciding on methods of instruction.

Generally, carrying out programs was listed as a cooperative job, although greater responsibility was assigned to agents. Committee members tended to give more responsibility to the agents for informing people about the program.

Evaluation here refers to the process through which the effectiveness of the extension program is determined. The survey was meant to determine if evaluation was consciously perceived as a part of role obligations. Answers showed that committee members were expected to appraise the extension program and to discuss problems with others.

Nearly half of the committee members indicated that evaluation of the county extension program should be



Committee members, ready to assume their responsibilities, await instruction.

(See *The Committeeman*, page 252)



# Judging for Themselves

by ROBERT HAILE, Mecosta County Extension Agent, 4-H Club Work, Michigan

TRAINED human emotions, tears, and misunderstanding too often follow judging at a fair or achievement show. In large shows, often there is a lack of communications and understanding between the judge and member, leader, and parent on just why an exhibit was given certain placing.

Many systems are used to improve understanding—oral reasons or check lists. These systems have their value. But an understanding of evaluation standards and improved communications could be helpful.

The Mecosta County, Mich., 4-H Advisory Council and Awards Committee set out to help control mixed emotions at shows by developing a member-leader evaluation (judging) system.

## Teaching Tool

The 4-H Award Committee felt that a member-leader evaluation system could be a good educational tool for the local 4-H club and county program.

For 3 years 4-H garden members, guided by their leaders and agent, have evaluated their own gardens. A scorecard was developed to help teach project standards.

The scorecard gives a good outline for leader-member discussion. In some cases the members, as a club, actually placed their gardens. Their placings were usually the same as the leader and agent.

Project tours gave an opportunity for learning standards, for evaluation, for decision making, for two-way communication, and thus, for a satisfactory educational experience.

The member-leader evaluation

system can be used to teach project standards which have traditionally been taught in project judging contests. Additional emphasis can be given to teaching project standards from the beginning to the end of the project in the local 4-H club.

## Member Judging

At the calf rally, which is a pre-county fair show to give training in fitting and showing, groups of dairy members were used to place the classes. Standards were explained before placing, and members were called on to give reasons. Official placings or ribbons were not given.

In addition to the county fair, Mecosta County has four district spring achievement shows and a fall show.

This spring, we experimented with member evaluation at district achievement shows and three local club achievement shows.

The clothing awards committee, consisting of leaders, developed clothing and modeling scorecards. In the boys' projects, scorecards were developed at the show before evaluation.

It is an educational feature to develop a scorecard. However, for the sake of uniform standards and time, it may be well to use developed scorecards.

Scorecards were developed and standards were taught. Members looked over other exhibits, rated themselves, and gave reasons for their rating. Uniform colored ribbons were given at the spring district achievement shows.

One 4-H leader and teacher said, "Member evaluation worked very well at our local club achievement

show. Members evaluated themselves much more strictly than a judge would."

Some may say this system will upset quality. It hasn't yet. In fact, quality has improved because of more concentrated training in standards. The percent of blue ribbons received by Mecosta County 4-H'ers was higher this year than last at the State 4-H Club Show.

For 2 years we have used member-leader evaluation at the fall show. In the fall of 1959 the author lead the evaluation discussion on photography. Members, as a group, evaluated their own projects. Blue, red, and white ribbons were placed on the exhibits. There were no apparent repercussions.

In 1960, at the fall show, leaders guided the member evaluation discussion in all the projects. Members were given a choice of green ribbons or a blue, red, or white ribbon. If a member felt he deserved a blue ribbon, he took it. But if he could not have a blue ribbon, he took the green ribbon.

In two cases, members thought they should have blue ribbons. In re-evaluating, they decided to take green ribbons instead. (I am not discussing the merit of the uniform color ribbon vs. the blue, red, or white ribbon system, but pointing out that in member-leader evaluation the blue, red, and white ribbons can present a problem.)

## Favorable Reactions

Grand Traverse County Agent Andrew Olson said, "At a local club achievement, members picked a dress review representative from their club which an adult judge did not pick. This girl went on to win the county dress review."

The member-leader evaluation system is being developed slowly and with caution. There is much to be learned from a scientific and operational aspect.

Judging can be used to develop the boy or girl by teaching decision-making and acceptable standards. There is better member, leader, and parent philosophy. Local 4-H people agree with the evaluation when there is improved communication and the members are involved in the decision.



With training, supervision, and help on the job, 4-H'ers can evaluate how well their own events meet the objectives.

## 4-H Club Members Help Evaluate Events

by MRS. LAUREL K. SABROSKY, Federal Extension Service

HIGH school or college 4-H club members can help evaluate 4-H events and end up enjoying it.

Given some basic training, adequate supervision, and help during the process, 4-H'ers can carry the load of evaluating. They quickly learn the basic principles and can perform informal evaluations objectively and efficiently.

### First Experiment

Several years ago, when first asked to evaluate a national event, I asked for a committee of six or eight 4-H members to help. I was not sure that the young people could do what was needed, but I knew that they could be of much help. By the time the event being evaluated had ended, they displayed competency.

Working with us were two extension workers who assumed the role of consultants in 4-H club work, leaving me free as a consultant in evaluation procedures alone.

Because of the success of this first experiment, I have followed a similar plan several times since then.

This is the way we worked. At the

beginning of the event the committee of 4-H club members, extension worker consultants, and I met together. I explained that evaluation means judging an activity or any kind of work only in terms of the objectives of that activity or work. We would need information, comments, and opinions from many 4-H members in order to obtain a good picture of how well the event, and its various parts, met the objectives.

This covers about all the basic training the 4-H members received. They elected a chairman and a secretary, and decided when it would be possible to meet each day. This usually turned out to be at mealtime.

### First-Hand Reports

They all came to the second meeting, which followed one of the first activities, such as the opening session, registration for the event, or a get-acquainted party.

We discussed what went on, whether the committee members enjoyed it, and what seemed to be the reaction of other 4-H members. Then we definitely related accomplishments to objectives.

For example, if an objective was for the 4-H members to feel welcome and to start getting acquainted with others, we discussed whether this seemed to work. If an objective was for the boys and girls to learn something new, we discussed whether they had learned anything new and whether others seemed to. If the session seemed not to be reaching its objective, we discussed possible reasons.

### Developing Skill

Members of the committee were more strongly urged to watch their fellow delegates' reactions, and to talk with them about the activities. They were encouraged to watch for the good things as well as parts that seemed to fail, whatever the reasons. I discouraged fault-finding, and encouraged critical analysis of the situation.

Day by day, our information about the success of the 4-H event grew. Committee members began to organize their own methods of obtaining objective information from other delegates. All information collected by committee members was discussed and recorded by the secretary.

As the event neared its end, there was seldom any reason to remind the committee that we were mainly interested in whether or not the event was meeting its objectives, and that we were not particularly interested in such things as the weather, inadequate food, cold rooms, or misbehaving individuals.

Of course, physical comfort, organization, fatigue, and misbehavior did enter into discussions, and rightly so, as these factors often prevent an activity from meeting its objectives.

At no time was any device such as a questionnaire or opinionnaire suggested or developed. We followed a plan of information evaluation. This demanded less time of the committee and provided more depth to that information which was collected.

The 4-H members in this kind of evaluation have been high-achievement members in 4-H club work. However, they did not necessarily have higher intelligence, training, nor achievement than the others

(See 4-H Events, page 246)

## 4-H EVENTS (From page 245)

attending the event. I would be willing to work with any group of 4-H club members, 14 years of age and older, regardless of their achievements. I feel sure they would learn quickly how to evaluate a 4-H event and would provide extension workers with valuable and usable information.

### Personal Benefits

The 4-H members who have evaluated a 4-H event felt that they were truly involved in 4-H club planning. I stress the fact that what they find out will help in planning the next year's event. They show enthusiasm for helping to improve and for maintaining the good parts of the event for other members.

Although this method of evaluating a 4-H event involves few 4-H members directly, it makes a real contribution to citizenship development in the 4-H program. A good citizen in our country must want to help others, and he should enjoy doing so; in going through this evaluation process, these 4-H members have felt they were working toward helping others, and they enjoyed doing so.

## EVALUATION STEP (From page 235)

to the masses through a system of carefully selected leaders.

In appraising the involvement of people, extension workers need to determine to what degree: lay leadership has been identified, encouraged to participate, stimulated to act, and trained to do their job; trained leaders are involved in the decision making process; membership of committees is representative of community leadership; and committee members understand their responsibilities and functions.

In planning program content, extension workers and local leaders must examine the existing situation, identify problems, consider alternative solutions to these problems, and formulate objectives in line with satisfying the needs and interests of people. In evaluating this step, several factors must be considered.

Where were we when we started?

To report accomplishment, we must have a benchmark about the situation in the beginning.

Was the total situation studied? Were all available facts considered? Were feelings of lay people taken into account? Was judgment of professional people utilized? Did the situation statement reflect trends?

Were people involved in identifying implications of these trends? Did the people recognize needed changes and adjustments as a result of these trends?

Were needs and interests of people stated as problems? Were alternative solutions considered and priorities given? Do the objectives indicate who is to be affected, behavioral changes to be produced, and content to be involved in bringing about the desired change? Since objectives are the focus in evaluating program results, these ingredients must be in each objective and stated in measurable terms.

### Launching Programs

In examining the plans for implementing the program, the following questions should be considered.

Are the goals related to program objectives? Is the subject-matter related to the goals?

Are the teaching methods suitable to subject-matter to be taught, teachers' experience and ability, audience to be reached, place the teaching is to be done, and learners' level of understanding? Are the teaching aids appropriate for the material being taught?

Is the opportunity provided for people to participate in the teaching process. People learn from doing and should have some responsibility for teaching.

Has the extension worker scheduled this activity on his calendar? Has he allowed enough time for its completion?

Extension workers need to systematically and continuously look for educational, economic, and social changes in behavior of people. They need to look and listen to those persons named in the objectives and goals for these results.

Gather qualitative and quantitative data on: what you saw or heard, where you saw it or heard it, who

said it, and how many times you saw it or heard it.

Complete records and well written reports will aid the evaluator in knowing if the people: have changed their attitudes and interests, increased their knowledge, improved their skills and abilities, and adopted new recommended practices.

### Interpreting the Facts

Are we accomplishing what we set out to do in our extension teaching? Have we made progress in getting people to adopt recommended economic and social practices? To what degree have program objectives been attained?

What new situations and problems were discovered as a result of extension teaching? What changes and adjustments will be needed in the existing extension program and next year's plan of operation to better meet the needs and interests of people?

What has been the effectiveness of teaching methods employed?

Interpreting and appraising information ties all the other steps together. It should be going on continually.

As the situation changes, we start collecting information again with the people. New and different problems will be identified. Objectives and goals will need to be revised and a new plan of operation made. Thus we repeat the program development process.

Evaluation is a means by which the steps in program development can be made more effective. It is not an end in itself.

If extension work is to move forward in an ever-changing society, it must continuously evaluate the effectiveness of its work. Extension workers must know to what degree objectives and goals are attained. They must have a means of judging effectiveness of various teaching methods.

Extension strives to develop finer families, living in nicer homes, on more productive farms, and in more progressive communities. We cannot make progress by doing more of the same thing in the same way. We must have better reasons for what we do tomorrow, next month, next year. Evaluation can guide us in this direction.



by DWIGHT E. PALMER, Associate  
State 4-H Leader, North Dakota

THE future rests with our young people. Every society depends on how well it prepares its youth to make decisions and carry the responsibilities of mature citizenship.

This can challenge the best educational efforts of the entire society. Chance and circumstance cannot be counted on to provide the experiences that will help young people become useful, well-informed, self-reliant, responsible adults.

4-H club work has a definite role in this educational process. Learn-by-doing projects offer many opportunities for 4-H'ers to use their hands and minds purposefully.

4-H club publications (literature) are the "textbooks" which provide subject matter information to 4-H'ers. This literature is not the only source of information, but it is an official means of recommending ways of doing things. What is our 4-H literature like?

### Study Aims

The author studied the subject matter and readability of 4-H meat animal publications from 46 States. Three particular aims were in mind: To analyze the content, major emphasis and limitations, and its relationship to efficiency of production; to study the reading ease and human interest style of writing; to compare the learning experiences suggested in the literature with the potential contribution of these experiences to the objectives of the National 4-H Meat Animal Programs.

A previous study indicated that most 4-H'ers get project help from parents and other family members. Adult leaders, junior leaders, other people in the community, judging activities, and 4-H circulars are also important aids.

Another study suggested that 4-H'ers often first learn about new practices from circulars, bulletins, and magazines.

If 4-H literature is an important tool in club work, then it has at least two jobs:

Provide enough vital information about the specific teaching objectives and suggested learning experiences recommended for the project.

Present this information in a way that can be easily read and understood.

If publications can do these two things, they can be effective teaching tools in 4-H club work. If the literature fails to accomplish these two jobs, its effectiveness will be limited.

### Literature Emphasis

Three topics of subject matter information predominate in the meat animal project areas. They are feeds and feeding, selection of animals, and fitting and showing animals for exhibit.

Marketing, grades and grading, recordkeeping, judging, financing projects, and management suggestions are not in many publications.

Generally the topics that predominated in the literature were also related to efficiency of production.

The subject matter emphasized in the literature would be more helpful in achieving objectives No. 2 and No. 3 of the National 4-H Meat Animal Programs (beef and swine) than in achieving the other objectives outlined in the National 4-H Awards Handbook.

The information, however, is too narrow to assure a member of enough learning experiences to adequately achieve even these two objectives. There is much more to the

livestock breeding, production, and management business than feeds and feeding, selection of animals, and fitting and showing of those animals.

A random sample of all publications was analyzed for reading ease and human interest according to the Flesch Formula. Meat animal publications are generally quite readable, especially from the standpoint of reading ease. The human interest factor in the writing of this material could be improved.

Flesch says this about the human interest factor in writing: "I consider the human interest factor more important than the reading ease factor. After all, if a reader is genuinely interested in what he is reading, he may be able to work his way through long sentences and difficult words; but even if you write primer style, he may not look at your stuff at all if your presentation is as dull as dishwater. Reading ease simplifies the job of reading; but human interest provides motivation—which is much more important."

### Implications for Extension

Information in the 4-H meat animal literature emphasizes selection, feeding, and fitting and showing an animal for exhibit. No doubt this is a popular and glamorous phase of 4-H livestock project work. Our educational obligations in extension youth work seem to require that meat animal project members be exposed to broader learning experiences.

Extension specialists who write 4-H literature should have a working knowledge of a readability formula and then should regularly evaluate their writing style.

Each person preparing 4-H meat

(See 4-H Literature, page 251)

## RD ORGANIZATION

(From page 239)

organizations have coordinated their program efforts. This appraisal is directed at both State and local levels.

Another question calls for an estimate of the degree of emphasis given the stated objectives of the Rural Development Program. The form also provides an opportunity to indicate degrees of program emphasis on other objectives.

The third section of the Guide stresses an appraisal of program results. It calls for a summary appraisal and estimate of progress, using level of expectations as a frame of reference.

This third section also provides a format for a record form that might be useful to inventory projects and accomplishments in each pilot county. Some States have used similar devices effectively.

This form includes columns for itemizing: major problems, agencies or organizations contributing to the solution of each major problem, specific projects or actions taken, the current status of the projects (planning, in process, completed), and specific accomplishments. The form illustrates the type of entries that should be made in each column.

As a concluding summary appraisal, the Guide calls for free-answer responses regarding the most troublesome problems encountered, the most impressive accomplishments, and possibilities for future improvement.

### Evaluation Uses

The major purposes of this simple approach to evaluating Rural Development are to stimulate reflection and further motivate systematic appraisal of the program. It is not a substitute for a comprehensive study of Rural Development's effectiveness.

The Guide can be modified for use in a wide variety of situations. For example, Texas and Arkansas are now appraising the Rural Development Programs with similar but more comprehensive instruments.

Extension has been given the coordinating responsibility in this program and the results of these and

similar evaluations should be helpful in identifying deficiencies and determining the overall effectiveness of program organization. An added benefit is that these analyses are highly educational and meaningful to those who participate in the evaluation.

All extension workers evaluate. When it is done systematically, judgment based on the results will be more meaningful, reliable, and useful.

### DO YOU KNOW

(From page 236)

type of extension cord?" The dealer explained that he had several hundred requests for this type of cord and didn't have them in stock.

Wasn't this an evaluation? It might have been more effective if the agent had followed through and asked other dealers in the county about requests for the specific type of cord. Better still, it could have been planned in advance.

Another agent wrote a series of news articles on foods. She asked the office secretary to keep a record of the number of telephone calls related to foods before the articles were published and during the next few weeks after publication.

The number of calls relating to foods increased tremendously and the number mentioning the article gave a clue to the number reading the article. This was informal, but planned ahead.

A county agricultural agent sent out self-addressed stamped postal cards to a sample of 100 farmers four times a year. These cards had three or four questions on current problems or on use of a practice.

One card was on the use of a new poison for boll weevils. Were farmers using it? What success did they have? Where did they hear about it? This agent had a wealth of evaluative material at his fingertips!

At a meeting I attended recently, the extension worker used this method for an informal evaluation. Those attending the meeting were asked to form subgroups of 3 or 4 people each and discuss the following questions—prepared ahead of time and typed on cards:

If you were telling someone else

about this meeting, what would you say were the most important points?

If you were planning this meeting for a group of people in your community, what changes would you make?

Groups were asked to write their replies, report back to the group, and turn in the cards. This gave some idea of whether the main points of the meeting had been learned and how the group felt about the meeting.

The extension worker must decide for himself the kinds of evaluation to be done. Some evaluation can be done almost every day if a person is evaluation-minded and learns a few basic principles and techniques.

### Formal or Informal?

Either formal or informal evaluation should be planned to be of most value.

Looking and listening with a purpose pays dividends. Know what to look and listen for. Be specific. Limit number of items on types of behavior. Observe many times and places with many people. Observe positive and negative reactions. Write down what you saw and heard, how many times, where you saw it and who was being observed. Be objective, not interpretive, when observing.

When should you attempt more formal types of evaluation? Some counties may never do a large formal study, even though small formal ones may be done. Perhaps a good philosophy would be the idea of a long-time evaluation plan in line with a long-time program. A comprehensive situational study may be made as the basis for a long-time plan. Small annual evaluations may be made, and at the end of a 5-year period, an extensive, formal evaluation could be made of results.

In summary, plan evaluation when programs are planned. If there is time to teach, there should be time to evaluate. Evaluate small parts of a program at one time and use many methods.

Try it. You may be doing better than you think. And if you are not doing as well as you think, you should know that, too. Evaluation can help you to know the difference!



by GRAHAM HARD,  
Clothing Specialist, Texas

PEOPLE want information that will help them become better buyers of wearing apparel.

This was brought out in a study conducted by the four clothing specialists for the Texas Agricultural Extension Service in 1958.

Mass media outlets—newspapers, radio, and television—were used to supplement the regular group activities of the county home demonstration agents in four Central Texas counties. Agents disseminated specially prepared leaflets on buying sport shirts for men and boys, street dresses for women, and school dresses for girls.

Specific information homemakers requested during the study concerned fitting, buying, care, planning, and construction details.

Plans for this study grew out of the need to reach more Texas people with information on buying wearing apparel. Clothing specialists also were interested in knowing what specific information was wanted by those who buy family clothing.

Traditionally the home agents have worked through organized home demonstration clubs. To reach more people in a shorter time and learn their needs, we felt that a different approach was needed.

For the past 10 to 12 years, clothing programs have emphasized construction. Requests for help on buying clothing were increasing. Research on family and individual clothing also indicated the need for educational programs on buying clothing.

Mass media was used to reach more family members. The program planned was on buying sport shirts, street dresses, and school dresses.

The clothing specialists prepared special leaflets on buying these items for the home agents to distribute. Agents were also given suggested newspaper articles and radio and television scripts. Tapes and film strips were prepared for the county agents and radio-television farm directors.

A four-county area near the center of Texas, considered fairly representative of the State, was selected for the study. The counties were Travis, Bastrop, Hays, and Williamson. Mass media outlets selected are available

in all four counties. All of the subject matter was presented in a 3-week period, giving one subject per week and using all media.

A random sample of 400 households, 100 per county, was selected. About 2 months after the information was released, questionnaires were completed by personal interviews. The sample included rural and urban areas and all racial groups. One adult in each household was interviewed. In most cases this was the homemaker.

Specific objectives of the study were: To learn some of the problems of clothing the family and the types of information wanted on them; and to determine the effectiveness of mass media in teaching consumer information on buying family clothing.

### **Results Recorded**

Thirty-eight percent of those interviewed received information on one or more of the garments by one or more media. This suggests that someone in about 20,000 households in the four-county area received some of the information.

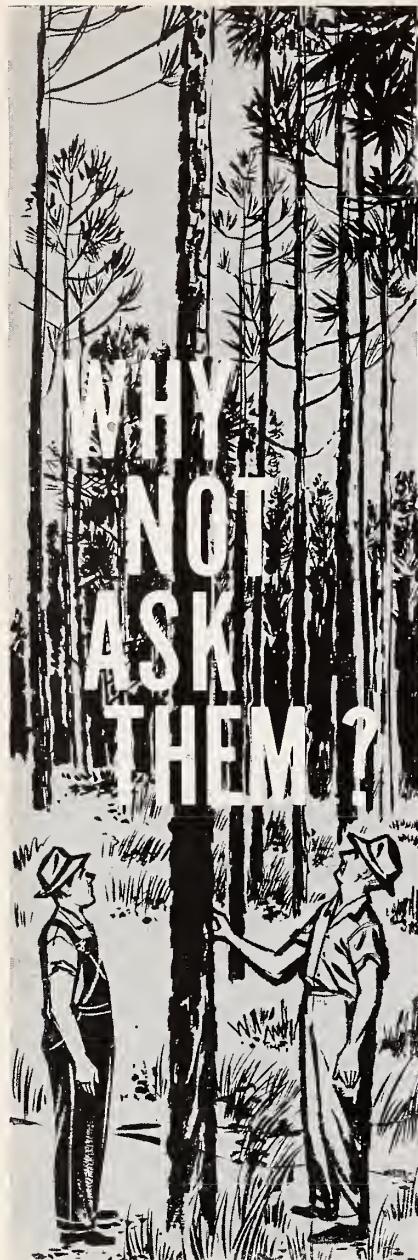
Those who had received the information were asked if they had bought sport shirts, school dresses, or street dresses since then. Forty-two had. Sixty-seven percent of those had used the information as a guide in buying.

Seventy-one percent of those who received the information said it would be helpful in future buying.

Sixty-two percent of those who received the information said they would like similar information on other articles of family clothing.

Thirty-eight percent of those interviewed reported problems in clothing their families. Specific information desired, in the order in which they were most often mentioned were: fitting, buying, care, planning, and construction.

This study indicates that a large number of people can be reached with consumer information by mass media. Use of several media, at the same time, with the same subject matter, within a given area seems effective in stimulating people to use the information received. As proof of our belief, we have passed the program material to other Texas agents.



by IVAN R. MARTIN, Extension Forester, Alabama

PEOPLE can give you a pretty good picture of where they stand if you ask. So, why not ask them?

"The public needs more information on how to estimate the value of a growing stand of young timber."

"Need more assistance with selective cutting."

"More interest in forestry now since paper mills are close by."

"People paying more attention to

timber since it brings in more money."

"Older farmers are harder to sell and most of them are not sold on selective cutting."

"We know it pays to keep down fire and keep livestock off timberland."

Whose statements are these? No, not foresters, small woodland managers, nor industry people. These comments were made by small woodland owners who do not follow recommended management practices, called nonmanagers.

Surprising? Not when you know these nonmanagers better. And this was the main purpose behind a study of 80 of Alabama's small woodland owners. Forty-nine of these had never applied management practices to their timber holdings. County agents acted as interviewers in the survey.

### Characteristics Noted

Nonmanagers seem to poke holes in old ideas. For instance, most small woodland owners wouldn't borrow long term money for improving their woodlands. They'd like to borrow on woodlands to improve their farms in other ways.

Woodland owners don't all need forestry education. This was indicated by an analysis of proceedings of the Small Forest Ownership Conferences held throughout the South. They already know that fire is bad, grazing in timber is bad, selective cutting is good, timberstand improvement is good, standing trees can be measured, and how weed trees can be killed. At least they know where to get this type of information.

These nonmanagers own just as many tractors, hay balers, and combines as their timber managing neighbors. They have just as many radios, TV's, freezers, hot running water, and electric dishwashers.

Nearly half of them are high school graduates; one out of six went to college, and one out of 10 graduated.

How about their adoption of other recommended farming practices? Nonmanagers drop a little here when compared with woodland managers. Yet nine out of 10 use hybrid seed. Three out of five test their soil and

two-thirds rotate their crops. Eighty percent plant winter cover crops.

This brings us to attempts to determine how forestry nonadopters rate when tested on another practice, say soil testing. Will they be nonadopters, or innovators, or somewhere in between?

Many small woodland owners who rejected forestry readily accepted soil testing. Only 25 percent refused to adopt it, and 50 percent rated as innovators or early adopters.

### Direct Questioning

There was apparently little correlation between nonmanagers and money, education, equipment, living level, or adoption of other practices. So we designed questions which might reveal their reasons for not being interested in forestry.

Nonmanagers rated the following as the most important deterrents to forestry acceptance: need available funds for other farm expenses, too long to wait, and too much other farm work.

Least important reasons, in their opinions, were the suggestions that tree growing was: too risky, too complicated, or would not pay off.

When quizzed on what they enjoyed most at forestry demonstrations and meetings, farmers showed a distinct preference for the social contacts. They liked talking with friends about forestry, weather, boll weevils, etc. They gave third preference to "listening to people on the program."

When nonmanagers were asked what would be the most effective teaching methods, they preferred individual visits by foresters and agricultural workers. Forestry Field Days were next in preference. But "2-day forestry schools" and "bigger ASC payments for forestry practices" rated low.

The most obvious need for information pointed up by the study was in marketing. Most nonmanagers sold by verbal agreement and by boundaries (bulk sale) or diameter limit. Only 10 percent had their timber estimated, and only one man had asked for sealed bids.

Nonmanagers have passed the awareness stage. They have attended

(See Ask People, page 252)

# BREAKTHROUGH TO LARGER AUDIENCES



by HOWARD DAIL, *Information Specialist, California*

How do you evaluate short courses designed to break through the traditional small group to reach a larger clientele? What will such an evaluation show?

These were the questions faced by Mrs. Winifred J. Steiner, home advisor of Santa Clara County, Calif., as she finished the last of three short courses on home furnishings.

## *Early Preparation*

The program consisted of two courses for beginners and one for advanced. Each course was held in the cities of Palo Alto and San Jose, thus reaching mainly urban and suburban women. Four meetings were held weekly from 10 a.m. to noon.

Mrs. Steiner aimed to reach a large number of women. She gained the cooperation of merchants who helped arrange meeting places, sponsored posters, and distributed the announcement in their monthly billings. They also loaned furnishings for the demonstrations.

Newspaper womens' page editors gave support in their columns. Mrs. Steiner also publicized this in her newsletter which reaches some 1800 persons.

Earlier Mrs. Steiner had decided that some evaluation was needed. The attendance had been good—some 71 percent attended all four meetings in her advanced course. But had homemakers put the teachings to work?

Mrs. Steiner selected from her advanced short course a probability sample of 18 percent of the persons who enrolled. She, Mrs. Jewell Fessenden of the Federal Extension Service, and Glenn Marders, extension specialist in administrative

studies, developed a questionnaire. Then Mrs. Steiner personally interviewed the homemakers.

Forty-one of the homemakers indicated that they had made or planned changes in, or additions to, furnishings as a result of the decorator courses. These women averaged 14 changes completed, underway, or definitely planned. The number of changes completed averaged 8 for the homemakers.

## *Showing Influence*

Of the 42 families contacted, 12 reported changes in 2 rooms; 10 reported changes in 3 rooms; 12 indicated changes in 4 rooms; 6 stated changes had been made in 1 room; with 1 mentioning 5 rooms changed, and 1 reporting no changes. Most of the changes were in the living and bedroom areas.

Of the living room changes completed, the most common was removing excess or unneeded furniture. Then followed regrouping furniture, buying new furniture, regrouping pictures, and changing lighting.

Most changes completed in the bedrooms dealt with painting. Removal of excess furniture was next, with drapery improvement and regrouping of furniture third. Painting was often the most popular improvement in other rooms.

Total changes ranked in order as: painting, removing unneeded furniture, installing or changing draperies, regrouping pictures, purchasing new furniture, and improving lighting.

Of those who redecorated, 14 indicated that the improvement presented problems, 8 stated that it did not, and 18 did not reply. Among the top problems listed were difficulty

in finding right colors and items, and limited time for shopping.

The redecoration was a family enterprise in most cases. Paid help was used by 13 persons. Thirty-four persons indicated interest in additional improvement and 37 were interested in further study programs.

Respondents indicated that friends had shown an interest in their improvements and asked for information, thus extending the home advisor's training.

Eight of the respondents believed their husbands would be interested in a further decorator course at an evening hour. But 25 indicated their husbands would not.

Mrs. Steiner plans to follow the same pattern in future courses. She believes this has proven a successful way of breaking through to large audiences not previously reached by Extension.

## **4-H LITERATURE**

*(From page 247)*

animal literature should keep in mind his State's specific 4-H teaching objectives for each project. A teaching effort or an educational program cannot be evaluated adequately unless there are some specific objectives to evaluate against. Periodic evaluation should be an important part of program development and execution.

It appears that State 4-H staff members with specialized training in understanding young people and extension livestock specialists who write most of the 4-H meat animal literature should do more cooperative planning when preparing 4-H meat animal publications.

## SPARK PROGRAMS

*(From page 240)*

Civil defense was selected as the number one topic for discussion at the 1960 annual meeting of the Ogle County Home Bureau units.

Because of high interest in farm management, a 4-week short course in farm management is being scheduled in cooperation with a State extension farm management specialist. Following the course, a building and equipment tour is scheduled on two well-managed farms.

High interest in the 4-H program has brought more emphasis to this phase of the extension program. Extension staff members are developing a special program to train 4-H club leaders.

### **Suggestions for Future**

For other counties which may want to take a survey, Fulkerson and Mrs. Barnes make these suggestions based on their experience.

Take the survey during the winter when farm work is not too pressing. April proved late for getting council members to interview and for getting people to answer questions.

The survey required about 45 minutes with each person. With well-trained interviewers, this length might be all right, but in our experience it was too long.

Be sure that all those making interviews fully understand the reason for the survey and are ready to take the responsibility to carry out the interviews assigned. Unless people are really sold on the value of the survey, it might be better not to ask them to make interviews.

The full benefits from taking a survey will not all show up at once. Some of the benefits have already stimulated interest in certain programs. But even more benefits are expected in the years to come.

ior. Agents possibly visualized the committee as an active, participating, county group. They may have responded to the performance of the more active members.

Committee members responded in terms of their own performances. If only a part of the committee membership is active, the question arises as to the need for the inactive members.

Committee members felt they should assume more responsibilities than they now have—even more than the agents felt they should.

About 40 percent of the executive committee members said they had received instruction for their job. Those who had training were in greater agreement as to their responsibilities and were better satisfied with the functioning of the committee. Also, members who served as leaders and had continued contacts with agents and other committee men understood their responsibilities better and were better satisfied.

### **Developing Committees**

Executive committee members gave these suggestions for improvement of the committee: 1) give more responsibilities to committee members, 2) select members who are interested and will participate, 3) rotate members on the committee so that members serve for a definite time period, 4) instruct committee members, 5) have better planned committee meetings, and 6) make the committee more representative of the overall extension program and clientele.

Seven out of 10 committee members came from full-time farm families, whereas three out of four families served by the Pennsylvania extension service are nonfarm.

On the basis of present research the following may guide the development of more effective advisory committees:

- County extension agents, as well as supervisors, need to agree on the purpose and the responsibilities expected of the county committee. Agents should agree on their responsibilities to the advisory committee.

- Select committee members who will participate actively in meetings,

who are interested in the extension program, who represent extension clientele, and who have a community as well as a county orientation to problems.

- Committee members should receive systematic instruction for their job.

- Committee members should help plan the extension program. County and State extension staffs will have to provide leadership in the planning process.

- Committee members should help evaluate the program. Criteria for appraising the total program should be provided.

- An agenda distributed in advance will help bring committee and program closer together. Planned meetings should encompass the total extension program. They should be productive, interesting, and punctual.

County extension advisory committees are a key communication link between professional extension workers and local people. The advisory committee is too often misunderstood and neglected.

Teamwork between county extension agents and advisory committee members will be improved if agents have: knowledge and understanding of committee organization to provide for effective functioning, leadership skills to provide guidance for the committee, and favorable attitudes toward the advisory committee and the contributions it can make.

## ASK PEOPLE

*(From page 250)*

forestry meetings. They do not lack information on how to proceed. Many are still in the interest and evaluation stages. This indicates a need for increased use of mass media to convince them. It also points up the importance of the influence of neighbors and friends.

Mass media and local leaders are proven extension aids. Perhaps an intensified forestry program in these two areas could reduce the number of nonmanagers.

Forestry is too important to be neglected. Our Alabama study indicates that extension's tested methods, if applied to forestry as conscientiously as in other subject matter fields, will produce results.

## THE COMMITTEEMAN

*(From page 243)*

entirely their responsibility. County extension agents saw program evaluation as a cooperative undertaking.

In general, extension agents tended to overemphasize committee behav-

# ***Putting VALUE in EVALUATION***

by DOROTHY M. SHERRILL, Home Management Specialist, Oregon

To be honest, the thing I liked best was that my husband and I talked over our feelings about money management and discovered some of the basic causes of our perennial disagreements."

"We found the long range view encouraging when we had been struggling along from payday to payday."

Comments such as these show values people found in a series of meetings on Making the Most of Your Money.

The series was held in Washington County, Ore., in February 1960. Five months later we conducted a mail evaluation. This waiting period gave us a chance to find out how deep an impact we really made.

Personal values expressed by participants have become "double-barreled" because they are also valuable to us in extension. They provide the means for us to capitalize on the successes of this pilot program in the initial year of Oregon's home management project in family finance.

Originally the evaluation was to find out whether or not we met needs of the 153 people who participated? Did we change their viewpoints? Did people do anything to improve their money management? What should we do to improve the series?

We got answers to these questions. But there was more than that. Responses are serving as tools for building expanded programs.

## ***Using Direct Quotes***

We used a majority of open end questions. We felt tabulation problems would dwindle when we set them alongside the values of direct quotes from participants. And our hunch was right. Today these quotes are strengthening our work with planning committees as they set up programs in other counties.

Direct quotes are also making newspaper and radio publicity more effective. What better way to hit

home than to use phrases which "sound exactly like our family."

These quotes are having another use, too. Previous experience taught the value in the slogan—Use the User. We are putting this into practice as we plan a second series in another part of Washington County.

Agents are sending a popular version of evaluation results to each participant in the first series. We think they'd like to know how their group rated the sessions. The cover letter will include an announcement about the new series. We'll miss our guess if those who found value in the program don't do a real job of recruiting participants for the next series.

## ***Weighing Influences***

This evaluation has proved to be good for morale of extension staff, too. It isn't hard to take the news that 99 percent found value in the series, with two-thirds rating it "very helpful." And the 86 percent who asked for another series tell us that we did reach our objective of making people aware of the vast area covered by family finance.

So much has been said about the word "budget" being taboo and about families not wanting to set up a budget that we almost believed it. We set out to give budgets a new image. Change them from "money strait jackets" to a plan for achieving what you really want in life.

Reactions during the session on budgets had given us an informal evaluation. It's pretty easy to connect lights in the eyes of participants with success of your objective. But our success was cinched when the written evaluation showed that so many had really designed a family spending plan.

Other values show ways to improve the series. Requests for more discussion have caused us to build this into program plans.

Over one-third said they would

like subjects covered in more detail. This has given us some questions to ponder. Did we burn up the material too fast? Should we have covered fewer topics in the time allowed? Or should we have had more sessions to cover the same five topics?

Because a study of money management is new to most people, we felt that a program on several topics would have wide appeal. We felt that a more detailed approach on only one or two topics would be in the more-than-we-want-to-know-about-the-subject category and wouldn't draw much attendance.

For the moment we are using one of our overall project objectives to help us decide how to proceed. Our aim is not to teach "all there is to know" about family finance. Rather we hope to start people on the right track and stir up enough interest that they will move ahead on their own.

Perhaps we will try the more detailed study in the future. Meantime, we've chosen to continue the short series on several topics. But we are going to strengthen our program by being more specific about where and how participants can get more information.

## ***Reaching Young Marrieds***

The evaluation also firmed some of our ideas about groups we would like to reach. A questionnaire used at the first meeting in the series told us that the majority of participants were between 30 and 59 years of age. Younger couples were few and far between.

Both informal comments and formal evaluation told us we should try to get more young couples to attend. But how? Polk and Marion Counties are working on a pilot program now to help us find an answer.

Agents hand picked eight young couples who have been married between 1 and 5 years. We let the entire group plan the series at its first

*(See Value, page 254)*

## POINTING THE WAY (From page 241)

Major concerns of the people lie outside of traditional areas of extension's educational activities.

Citizens need planned educational opportunities to discuss concerns, consider facts, and make decisions about issues confronting them.

Yuma County Extension Service needs additional educational resources in order to conduct educational programs that will help citizens resolve public affairs issues.

Through a well-planned and executed survey, an invaluable reservoir of information has been obtained upon which important extension program planning decisions can be based. The people have pointed the way.

## VALUE

(From page 253)

meeting. One of our objectives is to start them on the road to good money management. But equally important is finding out their reactions and hearing them talk about the values they find in this series on Money Matters for Young Marrieds.

We are doing informal evaluation during this series, but intend to follow with the formal evaluation. We expect that what these folks have to say will carry tremendous value in reaching other young marrieds throughout Oregon.

Doing this evaluation has caused some "change to take place between our ears." Evaluation has a new image for us. It's a means to bigger and better programs which will pay off in more happiness and satisfaction for the people in Oregon.

We'd say that's putting real value in evaluation.

## MEASURING DREAMS

(From page 237)

Even the simplest evaluation takes time, energy, and mental effort. Is the light worth the candle? You be the judge. Constant evaluation will result in:

*Better program planning.* To build measurement into a county program, planners must think clearly about

situation, clientele, and objectives. They must think about timing and resources. They must designate responsibilities.

*More intelligent program modification.* Evaluation may show, "It's later than you think!" This is a challenge! Or it may show you that you are on the wrong track.

*Better public relations.* Reports of accomplishments, based on factual information, win respect and cooperation. Radio programs and news releases become more meaningful if they grow out of objective data, rather than from wishful thinking.

*A basis for future planning.* We have to know how far we have come if we are to know how far we still must travel. We need to know if we are using the best vehicle, the best driver, and the best fuel to reach our destination. And we need a basis for deciding if we want to continue toward the destination. Evaluation will provide the answer.

*Professional satisfaction.* It would be sad, indeed, to end a career without having experienced the satisfaction that comes from knowing that an objective has been reached, a job has been well done. Don't let this happen to you! Be alert, discerning, perceptive, objective. Measure your dreams!

## PLANNING GROUPS

(From page 242)

High understanding was associated with these three kinds of discussion: information and clarification, evaluation and analysis, and suggestion. Groups that had high understanding, although given no opportunity for discussion at the orientation session, did evaluate and make suggestions in subsequent meetings. Those with low understanding did not clarify, evaluate, or suggest in any meeting.

In addition, there was a high relationship between understanding of the means and a belief that means were clearly explained.

Little time or emphasis was given at the orientation session to developing an understanding of authority as an element of a planning group. Groups which best understood their authority gained this understanding at sessions following orientation.

Reclarification usually came from

specific questions. Groups which best understood their authority were those which moved through the discussion sequence of asking for information and clarification, evaluating the ideas expressed, making suggestions about their authority.

Additional findings indicate that greater understanding of authority is associated with: the degree to which a clear statement of the authority structure is prepared and presented to groups, the degree to which the predetermined authority structure is reclarified consistently, and the degree to which there is agreement among those people making reclarifications.

## Implication Drawn

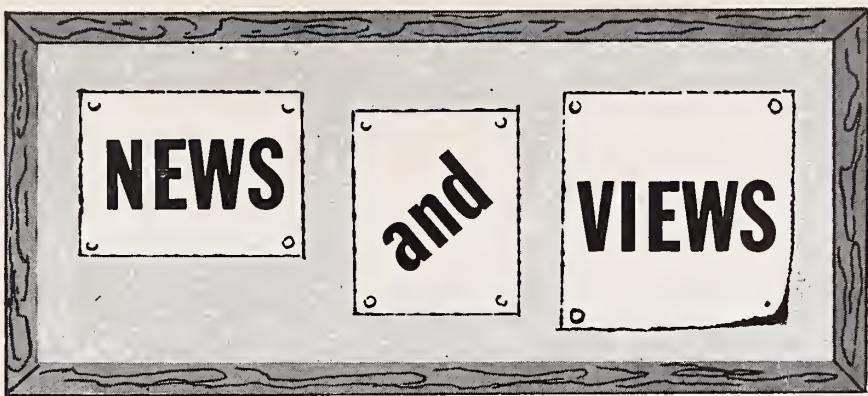
As extension personnel form and maintain program planning groups, the importance of communicating at least three social system elements—ends, means, and authority—should be recognized. The staff should have these elements clearly thought out, agreed on, and written down.

Orientation meeting plans should consider: adequate time, visual and oral presentation, questions and discussion, evaluation, and suggestion. The elements should be written to aid in understanding and for referral in subsequent meetings. Steps should be taken to assure reclarification or reaffirmation of the elements as the work groups proceed.

Though it is possible for group members to obtain relatively high understanding of their ends, means, and authority in subsequent meetings, it seems more efficient, in terms of total time used, to emphasize these elements in the orientation session.

The high relation between satisfaction with work and motivation is well established. Satisfaction with work is highly related to understanding the objectives.

*Editor's Note: Data in this paper is from Iowa Experiment Station Project No. 1278, A Study of Intensive Extension Education. The project was conducted in cooperation with the Iowa Cooperative Extension Service and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. For more details, see Group Formation and Maintenance, Roswell C. Blount, M. S. Thesis, Iowa State University, Ames.*



## Three Promoted On FES Staff

Dr. Edward W. Aiton, member of the Federal Extension Service staff since 1944, has been named Assistant Administrator for Programs. He succeeds Gerald H. Huffman, who recently became Deputy Administrator.



E. W. Aiton

In his new post, Dr. Aiton will have leadership for the five FES program divisions—agriculture, home economics, agricultural economics, information, and 4-H Club and YMW. He headed the latter division for the past 9 years.

The new assistant administrator is widely known among educational, scientific, agricultural, and industrial leaders throughout the country. He also has served educational programs abroad, having worked in the International Farm Youth Exchange program in 13 European countries and in leadership training in 11 countries of Southeast Asia.

A native of Minnesota, Dr. Aiton served as county agent, information specialist, and assistant State 4-H club leader on the Minnesota extension staff before joining FES. In 1951 and 1952, he took leave from the Extension Service to become first executive director of the National 4-H Club Foundation.

Mylo S. Downey, former assistant director, succeeds Dr. Aiton as director of the 4-H Club and YMW Divi-

sion. A Maryland native, Mr. Downey was Maryland State 4-H club leader before joining the FES staff in 1954.

New assistant director of 4-H club and YMW work is John Banning. He has been with FES since 1956 and formerly served on the Indiana State 4-H staff.

### BOOK REVIEWS

**FOREST AND SHADE TREE ENTOMOLOGY** by Roger F. Anderson. John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1960. 425 pp. Illus.

This book is a manual of forest, shade trees, and wood products entomology.

About one-fourth of the book deals with the basic aspects of entomology. The remainder treats specific forest insects. Chapters in this second section are devoted to discussions of defoliating insects—bark beetles, wood boring, and sapsucking insects; those that damage buds, twigs and seedlings, and roots; and cone and seed-destroying insects.

The tables or keys and illustrations should prove helpful in identifying the forest insect pests. Liberal use has been made of headings, sub-headings, and side-headings.

The book would be useful to specialists and county agents confronted with problems in forest and shade tree insects.—*M. P. Jones, Federal Extension Service*

**FOOD FOR AMERICA'S FUTURE** by twelve authors. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1960. 167 pp.

Will America be able to feed its 245 million people in 1975? The opinion of these men is a unanimous, "yes."

Firman E. Bear, Soil Science magazine, says: "Assuming adequate supplies of push-button energy from petroleum, coal, and gas, from wind and falling water, from nuclear fission and fusion, and from the sun, we should be able to produce enough food in this country to feed 1 billion—1,000 million—people and to feed them well."

Byron T. Shaw, USDA, says that research for abundance depends on many factors. Adequate manpower and facilities and the cooperation of all those concerned with getting research results into practice were listed among the most important ones. Not only the scientists themselves but legislators, educators, extension workers, farmers, and industry are involved in helping agriculture meet the demands of the times.

Herrell F. DeGraff, Cornell University, points out that just as today's farming is different from that of a generation ago, tomorrow's farming will be fully as different from today's. Family labor represents about three-quarters of the total labor force in American agriculture. He thinks the main purpose of it all will be to make farm-family labor sufficiently productive to permit the farm family to live as other American families live.

The twelve authors, in the twelve chapters of the book present very useful information on this timely subject. It should be of special value to discussion leaders on program projection.—*Richard E. Burleson, Federal Extension Service*

## Monthly Revisions in Publications Inventory

The following new titles should be added to the Annual Inventory List of USDA Popular Publications. Bulletins that have been replaced should be discarded. Bulk supplies of publications may be obtained under the procedure set up by your publication distribution officer.

**G 73** *Wood Decay in Houses—How to Prevent and Control It—New (Replaces the part of F 1993 dealing with wood decay control)*

**L 480** *Stanby Electric Power Equipment for the Farm—New*

# Fact or Opinion

by ALFRED L. JONES, Assistant  
McNairy County Agent, Tennessee

EVERYONE has a right to his opinion, but no one has a right to be wrong with his facts.

In a meeting of agricultural workers and rural ministers a few years ago, Dr. James W. Sells with Progressive Farmer magazine asked, "How many 4-H club members in McNairy County went to church or Sunday school last Sunday?" My reply was an opinion.

My answer to Dr. Sells kept bothering me. How did my opinion rate with the facts?

## Seeking Facts

In February 1959, at a 4-H club meeting, each member was given a blank card and asked to answer three questions:

How far do you live from a church?

Did you go to church or Sunday school last Sunday?

Why?

These questions were answered by more than 1,300 boys and girls between 8 and 16 years old.

The question produced a variety of answers—73 different reasons for go-

ing to church and 64 excuses for not going.

Use of the information has varied. Several ministers have requested copies of the summary.

The questions were intended to emphasize the Heart "H." It is a simple device to encourage youth to be better boys and girls.

## Attitude Survey

McNairy County's next informal survey with 4-H members concerned their attitudes toward 4-H. There were 30 questions, and only a random sample of clubs and members participated. Some of the questions were:

Would you pay to join the 4-H club? How much?

Do your parents know what your 4-H projects are?

Does your school teacher mention 4-H in the classroom?

Do you know the pledge to the 4-H flag?

Do you know the pledge to the American flag?

The purpose of this evaluation was to get some definite ideas that might be used in the yearly plan of work with 4-H.

From this survey, it was noted that some of the 4-H members confused the 4-H motto and pledge. Less than 80 percent of those interviewed knew the pledge to the American flag.

As part of the plan of work for 4-H clubs it was suggested that every club in the county use, in their monthly programs or meetings, the 4-H motto, the 4-H pledge, and the pledge to the American flag.

Another informal survey concerned the Health "H" of 4-H. It is frequently said that children do not eat breakfast. To get the facts about the boys and girls in McNairy County

we asked them, "Did you eat breakfast this morning?" To clarify the question they were instructed to consider as breakfast anything they had eaten from the time they got out of bed until they got to school.

The next question was a check list of things they may have eaten for breakfast.

This survey showed that 93 percent did eat breakfast, but 94 percent failed to eat a balanced breakfast. In every case fruit was left out.

The next program at each 4-H club was based on the importance of fruit in a balanced breakfast.

Future informal surveys will concern smoking, hobbies, study habits, safety at home and school, spare time activities, and others that will fit into the 4-H program and plan of work.

## Using Results

One reason for asking such questions is simply to get to know better those people with whom we work. Answers from such simple questions are real. They are not cluttered with detail.

Some of these questions may seem too personal or controversial. Most any question asked might be answered with, "None of your business." The boys and girls are made aware of this in the beginning, and we ask that no names be written. However, many do write their names, with the remark, "I'm proud of my answer."

These informal surveys are devices by which problems may be identified, which is the first step in extension teaching.

Try asking some simple questions of the people with whom you work. You may find opinion and fact far apart.







